UNITED
NATIONS

Convention to Combat
Desertification

Distr.
GENERAL

ICCD/COP(4)/CST/3
14 November 2000

ENGLISH
Original: ENGLISH/FRENCH

CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Committee on Science and Technology
Fourth session
Bonn, 12-14 December 2000
Item 5 of the provisional agenda

SURVEY AND EVALUATION OF EXISTING NETWORKS, INSTITUTIONS, AGENCIES AND BODIES

Note by the secretariat

1. In its decision 13/COP.3, the Conference of the Parties took note of the necessary contractual arrangements entered into by the head of the secretariat with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) on behalf of the Conference for the completion of phase one of the work on the survey and evaluation of existing networks, institutions, agencies and bodies.

2. Having taken note of the interim report on phase one of the survey and evaluation exercise submitted by UNEP on behalf of its consortium of partners, the Conference of the Parties has decided:

(a) To support the realization of a second phase that would focus on the southern Africa subregion;

(b) To request the secretariat to draft the terms of reference for phase two of the survey and evaluation, based on the phase one report and the discussions in the Committee on Science and Technology, as well as possible further inputs from Parties on their expectations of phase two, to be sent to the secretariat no later than 31 December 1999;

(c) To request UNEP to submit an update to the above report on phase one, based on the discussions of the Committee on Science and Technology at its third session and written comments to be sent by the Parties no later than 31 December 1999 through the secretariat;

(d) To request the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology, at its inter-sessional meeting, and after satisfactory consultation with the regional groups, to approve the terms of reference for phase two of the survey prepared by the secretariat;

(e) To authorize the secretariat to initiate the open tendering process for contractors to implement phase two of the survey and evaluation, and subsequently to enter into a contractual arrangement with the successful bidder.

3. For the purpose of the present report, the secretariat has drafted terms of reference for phase two of the survey and evaluation of existing networks, institutions, agencies and bodies, to be conducted in the southern Africa subregion.

4. The terms of reference for phase two as drafted by the secretariat, together with the update to the report on phase one prepared by UNEP, were circulated to the Bureau members of the Committee on Science and Technology and to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) focal point, for approval at the Bureau's inter-sessional meeting held in Bonn, Germany, from 4 to 6 October 2000.

5. The Committee's Bureau members considered and approved the terms of reference for phase two as prepared by the secretariat.

6. The Bureau members considered the advantages and the drawbacks of the various options for an open tendering process for phase two of the survey and evaluation and concluded that the most productive and appropriate approach to the implementation of this phase would be to invite UNEP and its consortium to continue their work.

7. The Bureau requested UNEP to submit to the Convention secretariat, by 10 November 2000, its tender and its work plan for the conduct of phase two of the survey and evaluation, and to indicate when the members of its consortium would be named.

8. The Bureau also invited UNEP and its consortium to take due account of the terms of reference contained in the annex to the present document in the tender to be submitted for the conduct of phase two of the survey and evaluation.

9. The submission by UNEP is contained in document ICCD/COP(4)/CST/3/Add.1, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its fourth session.

Annex

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND PROPOSED ORGANIZATION OF WORK TO BE UNDERTAKEN IN THE SECOND PHASE OF THE SURVEY OF NETWORKS AND INSTITUTIONS, AGENCIES AND BODIES WILLING TO BECOME UNITS OF A NETWORK TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

1. Background

Pursuant to articles 16 to 18, 19 and 25 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the Elaboration of an International Convention to Combat Desertification (INCD), at its tenth session, approved a networking of institutions, agencies and bodies as one of the priority areas of the initial Committee on Science and Technology (CST) work programme. Accordingly, the CST, under the supervision of the Conference of the Parties (COP) was to undertake a survey and evaluation of relevant existing networks, institutions, agencies and bodies willing to become units of a network to support the implementation of the Convention.

The work plan of such a survey and evaluation activity for the CST was to be broken down into three phases, namely: (1) identification and survey of the principal potential units, particularly networks, and establishment of a database based on responses to this Phase One survey; (2) a pilot, in-depth survey and evaluation of units in other regions and subregions; and (3) replication of the pilot survey and evaluation of units in other regions and subregions. In all three phases, the units (networks, institutions, organizations, agencies and bodies) shall include governmental, intergovernmental, non-governmental, academic and other private sector entities.

The secretariat, on behalf of the COP and in accordance with the terms of reference endorsed by CST/COP, appointed a consortium led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to carry out Phase One activities.

The COP, having taken note of the interim report of the survey and evaluation contained in document ICCD/COP(3)/CST/4 submitted by UNEP on behalf of its consortium members, and bearing in mind that Phase Two will necessitate a pilot approach to advance the survey and evaluation as a whole and further develop and test survey instruments with a view to evaluating both the interest and the capabilities of networks, institutions, agencies and bodies to support the implementation of the Convention, decided to support the realization of a second phase of the survey and requested the secretariat to draft the terms of reference for it, based on the Phase One report, the discussions in the CST at the COP 3 and inputs from Parties on their expectations of Phase Two (received by 31 December 1999) in the southern Africa subregion (decision 13/COP.3).

2. Phase Two

According to the above-cited decision and in conformity with the Phase One report and input from Parties, the Phase Two terms of reference apportion the work plan of the survey and evaluation into three activity categories as follows:

(a) A pilot, in-depth survey and evaluation of the potential units in the southern Africa subregion, including further development and testing of the survey instrument[s] (applicable to in-depth evaluation of networks, institutions, agencies and bodies). Due attention should be paid to those institutions working on training and education programmes for undergraduate and post-graduate personnel;

(b) Ongoing maintenance and quality control of the database created during Phase One, including continuing entry of any further responses received to the Phase One survey instrument;

(c) Operationalization of the database through appropriate awareness-raising and thematic-based inter-active activities.

3. Tasks expected to be completed by the Contractor in carrying out the in-depth survey and maintenance of the database

(a) To further develop the survey instrument for carrying out the in-depth survey and evaluation of the principal existing networks, institutions, agencies and bodies in the southern Africa subregion relevant to the effort to combat desertification and their role in areas such as information collection and exchange, research, technology transfer, benchmarks and indicators, capacity-building, policy formulation and local-level activities;

(b) For the subregion of southern Africa, to describe the actual respondents to the Phase One survey (including infrastructure, mode of operation and willingness and capacity to contribute to the implementation of the Convention), and map their geographical distribution;

(c) To describe categories of actual and potential end users of the database;

(d) To explore information needs of actual and potential users and the extent to which such needs are being met in relation to the provisions of articles 16 to 18 and article 19 of the Convention;

(e) To describe the linkages between the principal networks in the subregion and their linkages beyond the subregion;

(f) To elaborate to actual and potential users the structure of the network, the roles, responsibilities and benefits of being a member of the network, and the purposes, methods and benefits of strengthening networks at various levels;

(g) To provide ongoing maintenance of the interactive web-based database established during Phase One, including quality control and continuing entry of any further responses received to the Phase One survey instrument;

(h) To suggest a strategy, pursuant to this pilot in-depth survey, by which a global network of appropriate networks, institutions, agencies and bodies can be established for the purpose of supporting the implementation of the Convention;

(i) To conduct an in-depth survey and evaluation of potential units, particularly existing networks, and to further develop and test survey instrument[s] for replicating the second phase;

(j) To ensure the active participation of national focal points in carrying out the in-depth survey;

(k) To explore the potential for decentralized maintenance of the database, and identify appropriate institutions at the national, subregional and regional level that will assume the responsibility of housing the database and provide maintenance services. The technological requirements for decentralized database management should be identified.

4. Solicitation of bids from organizations

The CST Bureau requested UNEP on behalf of its consortium members to submit to the secretariat a costed proposal and work plan to carry out Phase Two activities by 10 November, at which time the proposed membership of the consortium will be identified.

5. Within the framework of these terms of reference, the head of the Convention secretariat, with the approval of the COP 4, is authorized to conclude contractual arrangements with UNEP and consortium members to undertake work on Phase Two.

6. UNEP is requested to report on the progress of the work to the CST at the fifth session, for the consideration of the COP 5.

7. UNEP and consortium members will carry out the Phase Two work plan in accordance with the above-cited terms of reference.

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